

EO maintains U.S. military's diverse strength

Story and photo by Sgt. Stephanie Hall
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Guiding the diversity of the U.S. military towards a path of strength rather than division by banishing the few lingering barriers to racial, gender and religious harmony is a continuous process for Bagram's Equal Opportunity team.

The U.S. military has evolved considerably since its earliest system, the Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI), which started in the early 1970s to remove discrimination from the ranks of the armed services, said Maj. Thomas McGeachy, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Mountain Division, Equal Opportunity program manager.

"This was (during) the post-Vietnam, early 70's era when you had some racial tension not only in the military but in society, so they formed an institute to see how we could best address those same issues we were experiencing in society and in the military to make sure we had a cohesive unit across the service," said McGeachy. The institute has since evolved into what is now called the Defense Equal Opportunity



Soldiers dance to a Latin beat at the Bagram Civic Center as part of the month-long activities Base Operations and Task Force 44 have created to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

Management Institute, which is in place to maintain that equality.

"What we do is we make sure that all service members and their family members have an equal opportunity towards professional advancement," said McGeachy. "In other words, that no one is discriminated against based on (his or her) race, color,

religion, gender and national origins."

To accomplish that, "we provide training, and cultural awareness (observances)," said McGeachy. "The whole idea behind that is it increases people's awareness" of the diverse backgrounds within the military.

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Germans celebrate National Day with awards

Story by Spc. Wes Landrum
Coalition Joint Task Force 180

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – More than 100 people joined German soldiers to celebrate its National Day at Bagram Air Base Friday night. Lt. Col. Wolfgang Schuster, German Liaison Officer said the holiday is a young one compared to other holidays celebrated by the nation.

"This day was established in 1990 when we got our unification," he said.

Schuster said being in Afghanistan on the German National Day reminds him that all the coalition forces are fighting for Afghanistan's future. He said the future of the country should be a peaceful and united one.

"Maybe a day will come when all Afghans will be able to celebrate a day like this," he said, and then thanked the United States for being the leader in restoring peace to "a land that has suffered from war for a long time."

"We, the Europeans, and especially the Germans, should always be reminded of the situation 60 years ago when we suffered and had friends giving us a helping hand," Schuster continued, referring to German reconstruction after World War II.

Schuster said when Germany needed help, the Americans were there just like they have been here for Afghanistan. He continued, saying the event was a "tribute to our partners and friends all over the world."

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



U.S. troops patrol near the Foreign Ministry after the explosion Tuesday near Baghdad.

Four killed in Iraq attacks Tuesday

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Three U.S. soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter were killed in two separate incidents by explosive devices Monday near Baghdad, the U.S. military said Tuesday.

In one incident, a soldier with the Army's 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment was killed west of Baghdad. Another soldier from the unit was wounded.

On Monday night, two soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and their Iraqi interpreter were killed south of Baghdad near Haswah. Two other soldiers were wounded. No further details on the deaths were available.

Meanwhile, a Shiite imam and his assistant have been taken into custody for storing weapons at a mosque, coalition authorities said Tuesday.

Imam Mu'ayyad Al Khazraji of the Ali Al Bayaa Mosque and his assistant, Abdel Jalil Wakiya, were arrested Monday for having assault rifles, grenades and ammunition at a holy site, according to a spokesman with the Army's 82nd Abn Div.

He said Iraq police, who arrested the pair, found four AK-47s, a bag of grenades and .50-caliber ammunition at the Baghdad mosque. It was not immediately clear if the 82nd Abn. played any role in their apprehension.

Pending further investigation, authorities said Al Khazraji was being held on the following counts: possible murder, conspiracy to commit murder, kidnapping, false imprisonment, harboring terrorists, soliciting weapons for delivery to terrorists and organizing illegal demonstrations.

A spokesman for the 82nd Abn. told *CNN* there are witnesses to support the charges but worshippers said evidence was planted at the mosque after the imam was arrested.

They told *CNN* U.S. soldiers entered the mosque to plant bombs, grenades and pistols and then photographed the cache.



A supporter of Tariq smashes a car window during the riot after the funeral of slain Sunni Muslim.

Students riot at Pakistan funeral

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan – Hundreds of Islamic students have gone on the rampage in Islamabad after the funeral of slain Sunni Muslim politician Maulana Azam Tariq, smashing cars and torching buildings including a mosque and movie theater.

Tariq, a member of parliament and a former leader of the outlawed Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) extremist group, was killed along with his driver and three bodyguards when unknown gunmen opened fire on their government car Monday after it stopped at a tollbooth at the entrance to Islamabad.

Pakistani officials fear the death of Tariq, 45, will inflame tensions between extremist Sunnis and Shiite Muslims after a wave of sectarian killings in recent months.

Police say at least five people were injured in Tuesday's rioting, after the prayer service for Tariq turned violent.

Pakistani paramilitary forces were called in to help restore order.

Thousands of supporters attended the prayer service during which SSP members vowed to further Tariq's struggle against the minority Shiites, *Reuters* reported.

Sunnis are the majority Muslim sect in Pakistan, and the group is blamed for the deaths of hundreds of Shiites, which make

up around 15 percent of Pakistan's population of 149 million.



Joseph Wilson says he believes the leak came from White House officials.

White House staffers face deadline in CIA leak probe

WASHINGTON – President Bush said Tuesday he was hoping the source of a leak identifying a CIA operative would quickly be found, but he also expressed doubts.

Bush spoke hours ahead of a 5 p.m. deadline today in which White House staffers must relinquish all documents that may be pertinent in a Justice Department criminal probe of that leak.

"I want to know the truth," the president told reporters after a meeting with his Cabinet. "I want to see to it that the truth prevails."

But, he added, "This is a town full of people who like to leak information. And I don't know if we're going to find out the 'senior administration official.'"

Journalist Robert Novak has said two senior administration officials gave him information about CIA operative Valerie Plame, which he then reported in a July 14 column.

Under orders from the White House counsel's office, employees must search their records and turn in all potentially relevant documents — including e-mails and phone call logs — to that office by the deadline, or sign a form saying they have none.

About 500 of the roughly 2,000 staffers turned over what they had on Monday, a senior administration official said.

The Justice Department sent a letter to the White House last week demanding that copies of the documents be given to investigators.

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“With equal opportunity (events), like the different heritage months, we try to make people aware (that) people are different,” said Staff Sgt. Robert C. Nunez, EO representative for Task Force 44. “We try to get people to understand that there’s more to a culture, or a race or an individual.”

In our society, “there’s always going to be prejudices, and there’s always going to be racism,” and that’s why the EO program it set in place, said Nunez.

So when there are EO complaints, “we always encourage soldiers to go to their commanders first because whenever we resolve an issue, that’s where we are going to go,” said McGeachy. “That will give the commanders at the lowest levels the opportunity to address issues.” In these cases, the EO team acts as a mediator between the two parties, he said.

In today’s U.S. military, miscommunication and misperceptions rather than deliberate discrimination are more often the causes behind the complaints reported to the EO offices, said McGeachy.

In his experience as an EO officer, McGeachy has discovered that “a lot of times what we find is usually just two individuals who aren’t communicating,” he said. “One person perceives something to be one

way, and when in fact you get the two parties together, and you start to talk, and it comes out, and it wasn’t what that person thought.”

The success of the DEOMI is evident in statistics like the ones McGeachy has seen since he’s been in Afghanistan. “I’ve been here since May and we’ve only had a total to date of 13 complaints that were brought to me, and of those 13 only one was substantiated,” he said.

Additionally, “it was something we were able to resolve informally,” he said. “We went down to the soldier’s unit at the company level and we resolved it right there on the spot between the soldier and (her) chain of command.”

The success is even more evident when “you consider we have over 11,000 folks in the Combined Joint Operations Area, and we only had one substantiated complaint,” he said. “But I think it’s the function of the command teams out there focusing on EO training and making sure that there aren’t any actions taking place that would be offensive to members of the organization,” he said.

Working with the commanders and senior enlisted leadership as well as with the individual unit EO representatives, “what we want to do is provide training for the unit so internally they can conduct their own

training geared towards their own needs versus me trying to give them a cookie-cutter approach,” said McGeachy.

“Each unit may have different things they need to focus on,” he said. For example, “we may not have to focus on sexual harassment in a unit; they may want to focus more on how do we get the different, diverse cultures within our organization to work together. That’s a totally different package we would put together,” he said. Working with the unit EO representatives, “we can tailor whatever training requirements (needed) to meet their needs.”

That teamwork demonstrates “to me, that the military, is a step ahead of society in terms of providing an opportunity,” said McGeachy. “That doesn’t mean we’re there and everything is perfect, but I think we’re moving along the right path. You just look at the make-up of our military. We have individuals coming from all different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds; we’re diverse,” he said.

That acceptance of diversity is vital to the U.S. military’s mission because “in our line of business, when we’re in harms way, you can’t afford to have any barriers between you and the next person in the fighting position with you,” said McGeachy.

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“Partnership is a prerequisite for reliability in the community of nations that believe in unity, justice and liberty,” said Schuster.

The Germans also used the event to award five American soldiers certificates for shooting gold in the German Armed Forces Marksmanship Badge Competition, or Schuetzenshnur in German. More than 70 coalition soldiers competed in the rigorous event. In the competition, soldiers fired from two stations with a German P-38 pistol and two stations with a MG-3 Machine gun.

“It is a very difficult thing to hit gold in the Schuetzenshnur,” said German Army Sgt. Maj. Paul Temmen. “But these five men accomplished it”

To qualify gold in the pistol, soldiers fired the weapon from the kneeling, standing and prone positions at a target 25 meters away. The target was a simulated 300-meter target. The soldiers fired at three targets on a silhouette. They had to hit all three targets with at least one shot.

“If you hadn’t fired a German pistol before, it was hard,” said Spc. Corey Stockert, 213th Air Support Group, one of the gold shooters. “Once you got the hang of it, it became easy.”

Staff Sgt. Martin Jones, CJ-9, said he had been trying to participate in the competition for years but hadn’t been able to until now. He said shooting gold is a “significant accomplishment” for him.

“I’m surprised I hit gold my first time out,” he said.

In the machine gun portion, soldiers fired at an 18-centimeter wide target. Inside that target was another target that was only 7-centimeters wide. The targets were from a simulated distance of 300 meters. They fired the weapon from the prone position from 25 meters as well.

With 15 rounds in the machine gun, soldiers had to put 12 shots inside the 18 cm target and three inside the 7 cm target to qualify gold.

“The key to that part is patience,” Schuster said. “A good gunner is able to make very short bursts, two or three shots at a time instead of wasting all 15 at one time.”

According to the rules of the Schuetzenschnur, to be awarded a gold medal, the soldier had to qualify gold at all four stations.

“The competition was very challenging,” said Jones. “We had no time to prepare with the weapons. We were just told to pick them up and shoot.”

“If you get bronze in one area and gold in everything else, you only got bronze,” said Stockert.

Army honors MPs killed in action

Story by Dennis Ryan
Fort Myer Pentagongram staff writer

WASHINGTON – The Military Police Corps dedicated a memorial plaque at Arlington National Cemetery Oct. 2 honoring the more than 200 military policemen killed in action since World War I.

The site chosen at the corner of McClellan and Eisenhower Drives holds special significance to military police and provost marshals since World War II. Retired Col. David Patton, a military policeman and previous Fort Myer garrison commander uncovered the connection.

“I discovered the military police school was at Fort Myer,” Patton told a crowd of about 150 present. “My search took me to what was then South Post (Fort Myer). We never found the exact place of the school.”

So the plaque was placed at the approximate location of the South Post main gate. The South Post of Fort Myer was located in land that is now part of by the cemetery.

Military police have been part of the Army since it's inception during the American Revolution and have served in all of the nation's wars. But the Corps was not officially established until Sept. 26, 1941.

The corps earned designation as a combat support branch for its service during the bloody battles of the 1968 Tet offensive in Vietnam. Military policemen fought Viet Cong guerillas on the grounds of the American Embassy in Saigon during the offensive.

Today, there are roughly 38,000 military policemen in the Army. Besides performing standard police functions on posts, they provide convoy security in Iraq, detainee handling in Afghanistan, Guantanamo and Iraq and area security operations.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: “The Banger Sisters.” Lavinia and Suzette, former rock groupies and best friends, reconnect after 20 years; one is still as wild as ever, while the other has adopted a more conservative lifestyle.



Tomorrow's movie will be “Pinero.”

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Thursday
Bagram:	Scattered showers H: 79F L: 46F	Mostly clear H: 77F L: 43F
Kandahar:	Dusty H: 91F L: 61F	Dusty H: 88F L: 61F
Kabul:	Scattered showers H: 75F L: 46F	Haze H: 73F L: 41F
Uzbekistan:	Clear H: 78F L: 44F	Clear H: 77F L: 46F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)

Florida spoils Wrigley Field celebration, Marlins beat Cubs 9-8 Tuesday

CHICAGO – Sammy Sosa took a signature hop, his ball soaring way over the ivy-covered wall and turning a packed Waveland Avenue into Bedlam Boulevard. At long last, his big October moment had arrived.



Rookie Miguel Cabrera and Pudge Rodriguez hit two of the Marlins' three homers in Florida's five-run third inning.

In a game featuring seven homers, four triples and six doubles, Sosa's shot was clearly the most dramatic. Everyone within earshot went crazy — well, almost everyone.

"We didn't celebrate, for sure," Marlins manager Jack McKeon said. "I think there was a pause right there."

The Marlins, though, were far from finished. Having overcome an early four-run deficit with a homer and five RBIs by playoff star Ivan Rodriguez, they won it with Lowell.

"Despite the way we've been playing, they just kept coming back, coming back," Sosa said. "They have a lot of heart for a young team."

"That's playoff baseball," Chicago manager Dusty Baker said. "It was full of emotional twists. I'm sure everyone is emotionally exhausted."

"It's disheartening. We had an opportunity to win the game," he said. "Sad we came out on the short end, very sad."

The sellout crowd of 39,567 started rocking as Moises Alou homered in a four-run first. But the Marlins, who posted three comeback wins over San Francisco in the opening round, stormed back when Rodriguez, rookie Miguel Cabrera and Juan Encarnacion homered in a five-run third.

"These guys don't quit, and it was very evident today," McKeon said.

Braden Looper pitched the 11th for a save, giving the Marlins a

win and a nice omen. The last 10 teams to win the NLCS opener have reached the World Series.

Too bad for the Chicago Cubs, he only tied the score. With the old ballpark still shaking after Sosa's tremendous, two-run homer with two outs in the ninth inning, Mike Lowell wrecked the Wrigley Field party in a hurry.

Lowell led off the 11th with a pinch-hit home run that sent the Florida Marlins over the Cubs 9-8 Tuesday night in the NL Championship Series opener.

"It just kept going back and forth. Weird," Lowell said. "It was kind of like a boxing match."

Bucs shut running back down, Alstott out for season with neck injury

TAMPA, Fla. – Tampa Bay running back Mike Alstott was placed on injured reserve Tuesday night with a neck problem that may require surgery.



Mike Alstott

Buccaneers general manager Rich McKay said the season-ending injury, which has bothered the six-time Pro Bowl fullback for about three weeks, is not believed to be career-threatening.

"In looking at it today and talking to the doctors, the safe way to go is to shut Mike down," McKay said.

"It should not affect his career. He should be able to return, based on where it is and what it is. But it is something that more than likely will require surgery."

Alstott started Monday night's game against the Indianapolis Colts, despite sitting out two days of practice to undergo tests last week. He rushed for 1 yard on three carries and had two receptions for 25 yards before leaving in the second half.

McKay said the Bucs are not sure when Alstott originally hurt his neck.

The eighth-year pro was examined by specialists last week and cleared to play after traveling to Pittsburgh for more tests on Sunday. The exact nature of the injury has not been revealed.

Security to be tightened for Bryant hearing

DENVER – Authorities are tightening security before NBA superstar Kobe Bryant arrives in Colorado for a hearing many expect his attorneys to waive, which would clear the way for a rape trial sometime next year.



Kobe Bryant

Dozens of threats against the prosecutor, the judge and Bryant's 19-year-old accuser helped prompt the tougher steps.

There will be armed guards at Thursday's hearing, one courthouse entry will be locked and a metal detector will be set up at the other for only the third time in years, a sheriff's spokeswoman said Monday.

The question is whether there will be a hearing to determine whether the Los Angeles Lakers guard will stand trial.

"If the defense doesn't waive it, what's going to happen is that the public, and potential jurors, is going to be left with an image of what happened in that room — and it's going to be an image that goes un rebutted," said Norm Early, a former Denver district attorney.

"I think it would be very detrimental to Kobe Bryant, and I just don't see him risking that kind of exposure."

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

U.S. warns of spectacular Taliban acts

Story by David Brunnstrom

KABUL, Afghanistan (Reuters) - On the second anniversary of its intervention in Afghanistan, the United States said there were signs the Taliban and al Qaeda planned more spectacular attacks in the country and urged Pakistan to curb militant infiltration.

NATO-led peacekeepers in Kabul said on Tuesday they had arrested a commander of a renegade faction thought to be allied to the Taliban that has been blamed for attacks on the city.

They said Ghulam Rabbani Abu Bakr, from the Hizb-e-Islami faction of one-time Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, was arrested in a morning raid in the city center.

Speaking on the second anniversary of the start of U.S. bombing of Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 that toppled the Taliban, U.S. special envoy and ambassador designate Zalmay Khalilzad said fighting "terrorists" was a long-term struggle.

He welcomed a border operation by Pakistan last week against the Taliban and al Qaeda but said it must do much more. "I think that's really critical. Pakistan cannot become a sanctuary for Taliban and al Qaeda people who want to attack Afghanistan."

Khalilzad said there had been a surge in Taliban activity in recent weeks, but there were signs the response by U.S.-led forces had been effective. However, he added:

"I think that in desperation they may try, there are indications they may try, to do something to get a lot of attention...There are indications that they are planning even larger attacks, more spectacular attacks perhaps."

The lead up to the anniversary has been the bloodiest period since the overthrow of the Islamic militia, with more than 300 people killed since the start of August, including aid workers, U.S. soldiers, government officials, troops and many rebels.

Authorities said on Tuesday a blast that killed two Canadian peacekeepers last week was likely a deliberate attack.

The violence comes as Washington struggles with resistance in Iraq and failure in Afghanistan to net al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden or Taliban leader Mullah Omar.

Khalilzad said there had been positive developments, not least NATO's plan to extend its peacekeeping role outside Kabul and plans to start disarming factional militias this month.

Others said the international response was too little and too late to protect aid and reconstruction work, playing into the hands of Taliban moves to turn Afghans against the West.

Paul O'Brien, advocacy officer at the aid agency CARE, said attacks on aid workers had soared in the past year from an average of about one a month to about one a day.

"Things are getting worse and we haven't seen the international security community responding commensurately. There's been a lot of talk and too little action."

The government welcomed NATO's decision this week to expand peacekeeping operations beyond Kabul but aid agencies

questioned whether NATO would commit enough forces in the right places.

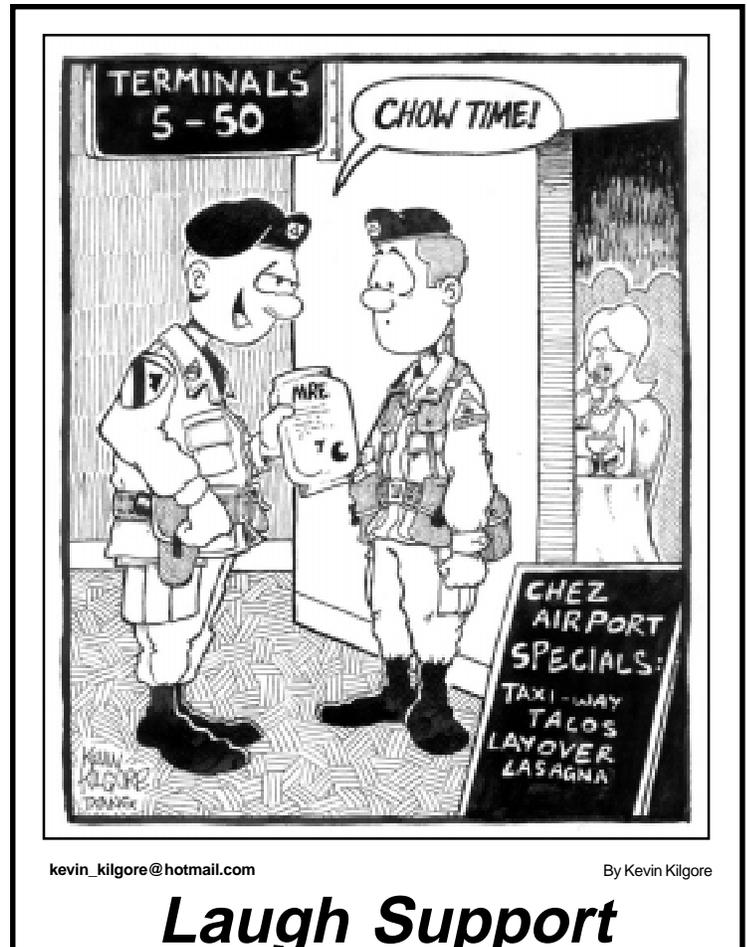
Barbara Stapleton of the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief said it was essential to provide security on high-risk southern roads where aid vehicles have come under attack.

Sending German troops to a relatively benign northern province as NATO plans was not going to help, she added.

Vikram Parekh of the Brussels-based think-tank the International Crisis Group said Afghanistan had not come as far as it should have in the past two years and opportunities to encourage reform-minded politicians had been missed.

Just ahead of the anniversary, splits emerged in the Afghan cabinet about who should contest presidential elections next year, with some reports saying the dominant Northern Alliance faction planned to withdraw support from President Hamid Karzai.

Khalilzad said he was "not that concerned" and had spoken to Afghan leaders who understood their "historic opportunity" to serve their country and the need to stick to a 2001 peace plan. Parekh said the U.S. focus on counter-terrorism had allowed a criminalization of the economy through the narcotics trade and led to growing disenchantment with U.S.-led forces.



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By Kevin Kilgore

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